SECTION V

Monitoring Plan for the North Carolina Child Support Enforcement Program
July, 2006

OVERVIEW

The Child Support Enforcement Program operates as a section of the Division of Social Services. The operation of the CSE Program differs significantly from other DSS programs. Child Support Enforcement is not an eligibility program and does not provide financial assistance to participants. CSE establishes obligations for child support payments and these payments from non-custodial parents are distributed according to federal regulations. While sixty-two local CSE offices are administered by the local DSS, many are not. Twenty-eight counties have CSE operations that are administered by the state via the Central CSE office. Five counties have hired private vendors to operate their CSE program, the county Manager administers three and one county operates its CSE office under the County Tax Administrator. State operated offices are grouped by area with an Area Supervisor assigned to each and non-state operated offices are grouped by area with an Area Consultant assigned to each. This monitoring plan covers the non-state operated offices per the County Child Support Enforcement Offices list attached.

All CSE offices are funded on a reimbursement basis according to their CAP on file at the Controller's Office. Federal Financial Participation (FFP) funding is available for all allowable expenditures. FFP is allowable at a 66% federal and 34% non-federal funding level for all but genetic testing laboratory costs. FFP for genetic testing is at a 90% federal and 10% non-federal level through October 1, 2007. As of October 1, 2007 the genetic testing FFP rate will change to 66% federal and 34% non federal. It should be noted that, because there are no financial assistance contracts associated with the Access and Visitation grant funding, Access and Visitation funding is excluded from this monitoring plan.

Single Audit corrective action plans are submitted to the Central Office. Michele Tart, Assistant Chief-Central Office Operations reviews and coordinates the responses for the Single Audit findings. All documents, monitoring tools and reports related to self assessment and monitoring are maintained and located in the CSE Central Office. The Central office address is PO Box 20800, Raleigh, NC 27619-20800. The main number for the central office is (919) 255-3800.

Compliance Supplements are tested through the use of the monitoring tools as scheduled in the attached crosswalk. Tools include the use of Section I, Attachment D-1 & D-2, the self assessment process, and the desk audits. Single Audit information is entered into the monitoring system by Michele Tart or the DSS Budget office, depending on the issue.

CSE’s program monitoring plan consists of two components. The first component is based on PRWORA and the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement’s requirement that each state’s CSE program monitor program compliance and submit an annual report to OCSE. This federal requirement is referred to in the child support community as “Self-Assessment”. OCSE developed their “Self-Assessment” monitoring requirements to totally fulfill the OMB A-133 regulations for the Child Support Enforcement program.

The second component of CSE’s monitoring plan consists of a system of desk reviews in each local CSE office. Quarterly desk review case information is collected on a monthly bases and is reported quarterly. The information is used for evaluation purposes and in the PMP process. Corrective action plans are not compiled based on the results of desk audits. However, the results are shared with the local office supervisor immediately upon the completion of the case reviews. Results are posted quarterly. These reviews are carried out in both state operated and non-state operated local offices.

Based on the OMB Circular A-133 requirement for monitoring non-state operated CSE offices as subrecipients and CSE’s goal to improve program performance, CSE’s plan addresses monitoring every CSE office in the state. OCSE requires that the Self-Assessment review be held annually and that it must include a statistically valid sample from the statewide caseload without regard to individual county risk. Additionally, the quarterly desk reviews are held in every county without regard to risk. All reviews are conducted under the assumption of high risk standard.

FEDERAL OCSE SELF-ASSESSMENT

The purpose of OCSE’s Self-Assessment process is to determine whether states are meeting Federal requirements for providing child support services. The OCSE Self-Assessment requirements and the procedure for implementing them are found in OCSE Action Transmittal 98-12. This Action Transmittal includes implementation methodologies, case review requirements, case review instruments, reporting requirements and instructions to the states. The Action Transmittal governs CSE’s Self-Assessment case review and reporting process. In order to comply with OCSE Self-Assessment, the Central CSE office reviews and reports program compliance in eight program areas:

Case Closure
Establishment of Paternity and Support Orders
Expedited Process
Disbursement of Collections
Enforcement of Support Orders
Medical Support Enforcement
Review and Adjustment
Interstate Services

Each federal fiscal year, reviews are performed for cases throughout the state. The annual report is completed each March following the FFY. The System User Support Unit located at the CSE Central Office is responsible for performing the statewide Self-Assessment review and preparing the annual report. The Self-Assessment review process is carried out in an automated manner, to the extent possible. When manual case reviews are needed the User Support staff utilizes CSE's Automated Collection and Tracking System (ACTS) for case review. System case review is possible because ACTS is a detailed management system containing extensive case data. The members of the User Support Unit have many years of both child support program experience and experience with the ACTS system.

For the past four years, the User Support staff has worked with the ACTS project staff to develop programs to identify cases universes and statistically valid random case samples for each of the eight program areas. ACTS programs were written to evaluate sample cases in most of the program areas and some cases were reviewed manually to validate the results. For areas with more complex review criteria, each sample case was reviewed manually. Once reviews were completed, the efficiency rate was calculated for each program area passed on the number of cases that passed the review criteria.

The User Support staff continues to work with the DSS data warehouse staff to load ACTS data into the data warehouse and to mentor evaluation tools in order to review via the data warehouse. Using the data warehouse to identify the case universes and to perform the case reviews allows CSE to review each case in the universe instead of just a sample. This complete review process gives CSE the opportunity to identify every case throughout the state that is in or out of compliance and to identify the reason for the non-compliance. The project schedule allows for data warehouse reviews. The eight program areas will be manually reviewed for a sample of cases this year with the data warehouse. Utilizing the data warehouse to perform Self-Assessment reviews allows CSE to report more complete statewide results to OCSE annually. CSE also performs quarterly Self-Assessment reviews. CSE management and local offices are able to drill down to obtain complete caseload compliance results for each county and for each responsible worker for the annual reviews and for the quarterly reviews.

Results of the self assessment audit are entered into the monitoring system quarterly by the Program Assistant IV, Carol Ray of the Central Office. Area Supervisors and Consultants monitor and review Self-Assessment results for each of their counties. On an annual basis, they utilize the case review results and work with local supervisors to formulate a corrective action plan for each local office. Area Supervisors and Consultants follow up with the counties to ensure that the corrective actions are/have been taken.

QUARTERLY ON-SITE DESK REVIEWS

CSE has developed a monitoring process utilizing local office desk reviews. The Objectives of the process are: 1) to ensure that cases are being processed according to federal requirements and CSE policy 2) to ensure that correct ACTS procedures are being followed 3) to provide a tool in identifying training needs 4) to provide feedback regarding effective case management and 5) to identify practices utilized by the most productive workers. A detailed desk/quality review checklist and an instruction packet have been developed as instruments for conducting the case reviews. These instruments are utilized for each case as it is reviewed. Sample cases are selected from ACTS reports and office logs to ensure that cases in various processing statuses are represented. In each local office Area Supervisors and Consultants review three cases each month. These desk reviews are performed during the Area Supervisor/Consultant's regularly scheduled technical assistance visits to the local office. The Area Supervisor/Consultant insures that the local office Supervisor is familiar with the desk review instruments and understands the purpose of the case reviews.

Additionally, local supervisors in state operated offices perform three case reviews per child support agent caseload each month. The desk review checklists are scored and tabulated for each child support agent and used as part of the PMP process.

Quarterly desk review case information is collected on a monthly basis and is reported quarterly. The quarterly desk review data is not included in the annual or quarterly report computations. The results of the desk audit are immediately shared with the local supervisor and used in the PMP evaluation process.

For local offices, the desk review checklists are scored and tabulated. The results of the desk reviews are monitored by the Area Supervisors/ Consultants and utilized to formulate each office's corrective action plan. Additionally, local office review sheets are tabulated to calculate the number of errors in each case management area. This information is used by the Central Office Policy and Training staff to identify training needs in specific offices and statewide. Desk review results are entered into the monitoring system quarterly by Carol Ray in the central office.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A- OCSE Action Transmittal 98-12 (pages 4-37)
Attachment B-Desk Review Checklist (Pages 38-40)
Attachment C- Desk Review Instruction (pages 41-51)